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ABSTRACT

The National Education Goals, Goals 2000, were signed into law by President Clinton in 1994. From 1989 to 1994 the goals existed in a symbolic context with minimal funding to support them. An unpredictable series of events sustained the National Education Goals through a period of potential obscurity to enactment. The goals appear to be unique in the history of national education policy development for two reasons. First, they are an anomaly when compared to the methods used to establish national policy. Second, the passage of Goals 2000 marks the expansion of the federal government's role in public education. This paper describes the unusual chain of events that led to the legislation of national goals and standards--the period of gestation from 1983 to early 1991, the "America 2000" era from April 1991 through 1992, and the "Goals 2000" era from 1993 to the present. An implication is that although local school boards and school districts will continue to play an important role in policy formation, their choices will be limited to deciding how to implement federal goals. Educators must lobby for those policies at the federal level that best support children. Appendices contain a timeline of eras, key players, and events; a chronological list of events; a glossary; and the National Education Goals. (Contains 104 references.) (LMI)

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National Education Goals and Standards: The Unpredictable Evolution of National Policy for All Students

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A paper reporting research conducted as part of the Proficiency-based Admissions Standards System (PASS) Project, Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE) in 1994.

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"Education is now a major, high-priority national concern, as well as a state and local responsibility."

Terrel Bell, the secretary of education who commissioned *A Nation at Risk* (1993, p.595)

Goals 2000

The National Education Goals

1. **By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.**
2. **By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.**
3. **By the year 2000, American students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, , economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy.**
4. **By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.**
5. **By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.**
6. **By the year 2000, every school in American will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.**
7. **By the year 2000, the Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.**
8. **By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.**

Few of us could recite all of the national education goals. Still fewer could explain their complicated and intricate evolution. Why should we try to understand how the national goals and standards came into being? It is my belief that educators, whether at the local, state, or federal level, should have a basic understanding of both the forces that influence or control public education and the processes whereby education policy is developed. Such an understanding allows individuals and groups to exert influence during the development of education policy.

The national education goals, *Goals 2000* (1994a), were signed into law by President Clinton on March 31, 1994. From 1989 to 1994 the goals existed in a symbolic context with minimal funding to support them – they were largely rhetorical. During that time numerous opportunities and events could have relegated the goals to some easily forgotten niche in political history. But an unpredictable series of events sustained the national education goals through to enactment. The goals appear to be unique in the history of national education policy development for at least two reasons. First, they are an anomaly vis-á-vis the methods used to establish national policy. Second, with the passage of *Goals 2000* the federal presence in public education has expanded dramatically, and perhaps irreversibly.

This paper describes the unusual chain of events that led to the legislation of national goals and standards. The discussion proceeds generally in chronological order. The paper is comprised of five parts: (1) an introduction; sections outlining the events in three eras leading to the adoption of the goals: (2) the period of gestation from 1983 to early 1991, (3) the *America 2000* era from April 1991 through 1992, (4) the *Goals 2000* era from 1993 to the present, and (5) a conclusions and interpretation section. Three appendices provide a visual image and summary to facilitate understanding the events. Appendix A provides a time-line showing eras, years, key events and people involved in development of the national education goals. Appendix B lists significant events chronologically. Appendix C references important names, reports, and terms.

Introduction

National education policy typically evolves through the legislative process, originated by the administration or Congress. Special interests groups often influence the administration and Congress's actions. Policy also develops through interpretation within the court system. School desegregation and school finance provide examples. The national goals were legislated in 1994 when Clinton signed them, but before that, for a period of nearly five years they existed only in writing. While the goals were not legitimized by Congress during this period they nevertheless existed as policy – symbolic policy. Some might argue that no policy exists until legislative or court action creates it at a specific point in time. Others would suggest that policy is a process, and in the case of the national goals, that process began in 1989 and extended over a five-year period to passage of the *Goals 2000* legislation which formalized the policy.

Majchrzak (1984) distinguishes six mechanisms for achieving policy objectives (p. 24-28). Most of the mechanisms require legislative action, but one, symbolic priority setting, does not. "Priority-setting mechanisms involve recommendations which simply indicate that the problem is an important one and worth further attention. While priority-setting mechanisms may be used to delay a decision or make a 'nondecision' such a mechanism can occasionally have a dramatic impact on the problem" (p. 25). The process whereby the national goals were formed provides a good example of symbolic priority setting as a means to establish policy objectives. For nearly five years the national goals existed in a symbolic context with no legislative legitimization until 1994. Long before they were formalized in *Goals 2000* the national education goals exerted substantial influence on public education

Having evolved in a unique fashion, the national education goals have also marked a significant shift in involvement by the federal government in educational policy. Historically, states and local school districts have been the primary locus of school policy creation. Some exceptions have occurred. Congress reacted to the Sputnik crisis by passing the 1958 *National Defense and Education Act,* but for the most part federal policy in education has focused on specific populations like the disabled and disadvantaged. The federal government presently funds only a small portion

of education (approximately 6%), but the federal impact on public schools is considerably greater than the funding level implies.

Federal influence in public education results primarily through the laws, rules, and regulations that are conditions of receiving federal funds. This trend of federal control through funding has continued with *Goals 2000*. To receive funds under the act states must adopt a school improvement plan with strategies for meeting the national goals including adoption of state standards and assessments (1994a, Sec. 306(c)). With the signing of the reauthorized *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) in October 1994, adoption of the standards and assessments in *Goals 2000* has become a requirement for states and local school districts to receive Chapter 1 funds (Pitsch, 1994a; Pitsch, 1994e). This development is no accident. The administration intended *Goals 2000* to be an umbrella for all federal education policy into the 21st century (1994a, Sec. 2(6); U.S. Department of Education, 1994a).

Some might argue convincingly that *Goals 2000* shifted more control to the federal government, that the shift will result in federal domination and that the national goals assert that domination. The importance of state and local school districts, however, remains. Historically, education has been controlled locally by school boards and communities through local school districts. *Goals 2000* stated that "simultaneous top-down and bottom-up education reform is necessary" (1994a, Sec. 301(4)). This statement emphasizes the importance of local schools and communities in public education. The challenge to state and local educators and communities is to coordinate their needs with the national education goals and the associated standards and assessments.

Origins of the Goals

The evolution that led to passage of the national goals began in 1983 with the publication and release of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The report resulted in education reform being moved to the forefront as a political issue and educators being put on the defensive (Bell, 1993; Clark & Astuto, 1990). Excellence, the quality of public

education, became a common term in educational discussions. The report, like so many since, decried the failure of public education to meet world class standards and to develop workers competitive in the world economy. Education, the report noted, had not only failed students, it had failed society. The report had the effect of making education a more visible public concern – a political issue. No political candidate could ignore the importance of education.

One immediate effect of the report was President Reagan's decision not to close the U.S. Department of Education. Bell (1993), then secretary of education, described the shift. "Following the release of the report ... I heard no more about abolishing the Department of Education" (p. 595). Eliminating the Department of Education had been one of Reagan's main goals for education (Clark & Astuto, 1990).

A Nation at Risk began the shift to make education a state priority. The states through the National Governors' Association (NGA) formed the primary focus for addressing educational issues. Federal involvement was minimized during the Reagan years (Clark & Astuto, 1990; Cohen, 1990; Wirt & Kirst, 1989). Roy Romer, governor of Colorado, noted, "Since the publishing of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, the leadership of the nation's governors has led to the development of the national education goals and a commitment to restructure American education" (David & Goren, 1993, p. 5).

Lamar Alexander, governor of Tennessee from 1979 to 1987 and President Bush's last secretary of education from March 1991 to the end of his administration, said, "I was chairman and Bill Clinton was vice-chairman of the National Governors' Association in 1985-1986 when, for the first time, the governors devoted an entire year to a single subject: education" (Alexander, 1992). The 1986 NGA report, *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education* (National Governors' Association, 1986) documented the governors' concerns and plans and recommended annual reporting on progress through 1991. The annual reports were intended to address the concerns raised in the report and chart progress

During the period immediately before the 1988 elections the first mention of national goals appeared. During the summer of 1988 a ten-day meeting of two dozen leading educators, industry

representatives, government officials, and policy analysts was held at the Aspen Institute of Humanistic Studies. Participants, including Darling-Hammond, Finn, Honig, Ravitch, and Rockefeller, worked to frame a policy agenda for the incoming administration. In a summation of the group's efforts, the participants made explicit their commitment to national education goals, the first of any such reference. The language of the comments indicates the novelty of the idea at that time.

> What we have in mind is a step that can energize the highly decentralized and complex systems of American education, by developing a broad, nationwide consensus on what we want to achieve with that system. Our proposal envisions a process that will develop performance goals for American education.... What we'd hope is that the new administration will take the first steps to get a nationwide process going, to start a conversation about five to seven [national] education goals and indicators of their attainment.... The approach charts out a role for federal leadership in education that has not been explicit up to now. (Marchese, 1988, pp. 15, 16).

President Bush, the next major player, entered the scene in November 1988 when America elected him as the first "education" president. His search to develop a domestic agenda for education prompted him to host jointly with the NGA the "historical Charlottesville Education Summit" (National Governors' Association, 1990b; The White House, 1990) in September 1989. It is unclear whether the governors or the president deserves the credit for the summit (Pipho, 1989). Hosting a summit on educational issues and working with the governors formed a logical step during President Bush's first year in office. From the governors' perspective, involvement of the president promoted their agenda and helped them address the challenges of reform. The primary outcome of the summit was that "the governors and President agreed to develop national goals to help the nation achieve excellence in education" (The White House, 1990, Appendix). The governors acknowledged in their fourth *Results in Education* report (National Governors' Association, 1990c, p. v) that a time frame through the end of the decade was required to accomplish substantial restructuring of public education. Educational reform presented a more complex issue than initially thought. The summit and the resulting national education goals provided a policy framework that allowed the governors and the president to begin to coordinate their efforts to improve education.

It is noteworthy that the governors and President Bush excluded Congress from involvement in the development of the national goals. Apparently both the governors and the president felt congressional participation would not facilitate the agenda of educational reform. Only later, when the need for funding arose, did President Bush seek congressional assistance.

The first set of national education goals garnered considerable public attention when President Bush discussed them in his State of the Union speech on January 31, 1990. The six goals were adopted by the NGA on February 25, 1990 (National Governors' Association, 1990a, Appendix A; National Governors' Association, 1990b) and were released to the public by the president and the NGA in a joint communiqué on February 26, 1990. The six goals were:

1. By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.
2. By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
3. By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.
4. By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
5. By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
6. By the year 2000, every school in American will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning (The White House, 1991, Appendix A).

In a four month period of time, September 1989 to January 1990, the six formative goals that would direct national educational policy through the year 2000 were written and approved by the governors and the president. In such a constrained timeframe, the public and education community had minimal input in the development of the goals. Speculation occurred at the time regarding the impact of the goals (1990; Gough, 1990; Honig, 1990; Lewis, 1990a; Lewis, 1990b).

The next significant development was the formation of the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP). The governors and the president agreed to establish the NEGP in July 1990 when they determined that it would be necessary to report annually about progress towards achieving the

goals (Jaschik, 1990; Morganthau, 1990; The White House, 1991, Appendix C). Six governors, four representatives of the administration, and four members of Congress comprised the original NEGP (National Education Goals Panel, 1991c). Morganthau (1990) noted the circumstances and some of the political dimensions surrounding the creation of the NEGP.

> The goals panel can be fairly described as one of the stranger attempts at federal-state collaboration in modern times. It reports to no one, has no specified funding source and was created by a group (the NGA) that has no constitutional authority. Its structure reflects the Bush administration's distrust of congress, the governors' distrust of Washington and the distrust between Republicans and Democrats. It is nothing like the prestigious national commission that Boyer had in mind--and the education establishment, which is already miffed by its exclusion from the Charlottesville summit, must have observed that it has been excluded from the panel as well (p. 76).

The NEGP appointed Governor Romer the first chairman. Romer had been signatory to the fourth and final NGA report (National Governors' Association, 1990c) and his appointment ensured continuity in the promotion of the national education agenda.

In July 1990 the President reported to the governors regarding administrative efforts to support the goals. The President outlined the substantive nature of the national education goals.

> These goals are ambitious, yet realistic. They provide, for the first time, a sense of direction for individual and collective efforts to improve the quality of education for all Americans. We must now turn our attention to the formidable task of ensuring that these national goals are attained (The White House, 1990, p. i).

Another section of the introduction to the report provides insight into the lack of direction the goals had at that point. "In the months ahead, the President's Education Policy Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from labor, business, media, and all levels of education will continue to recommend ways to disseminate the national education goals and mobilize national effort to realize them" (p. v).

The Department of Education published the goals for the first time in July 1990 to little, if any, fanfare. (The White House, 1990; U.S. Department of Education, 1990). Schroeder (1990) described the publication as a little green pamphlet, an accurate description since it measured four-by-nine inches and was only 16 pages in length. Now that the President and the governors had national goals, what were they going to do with them? Certainly it would be more than publishing a "little green pamphlet."

The President's second report to the NGA (The White House, 1991) framed the next period of time. The second report began, "Since our last report to the Governors in July 1990, President Bush has advanced his commitment to education and the national education goals through a wide range of activities and initiatives" (p. 1). Numerous activities were listed, but for the most part the activities were rhetorical in nature or concerned the realignment of existing activities within the framework of the goals. Two items stood out. First, the President stated his intention to request $690 million in the 1992 fiscal budget for new educational legislation to support the national educational goals including school choice. Second, the report showed that all federal efforts in public education were to be restructured to align with the national goals. The fiscal 1992 budget, included in the report, provided an excellent example as all educational programs had been listed by goal. The report discussed what different federal departments, including the departments of Justice, Labor, Agriculture, Interior, and Health and Human Services, were doing to support administrative efforts towards the goals.

The literature of the time reflected the growing importance of the goals as well. The October 1990 issue of *Educational Digest* focused on the national educational goals. Republished copies of the goals and the NGA report (1990a) on state strategies along with other articles on the goals were included in the issue. *Phi Delta Kappan* devoted the December 1990 issue to the goals. Introductory editorials and articles discussed the goals in general followed by individual articles discussing each of the six goals.

The first two years of the Bush administration, when Lauro Cavazos was secretary of education, were not viewed as particularly productive ones. Peters (1993) noted, "Until 1991 very little happened with education policy. The issue of education remained an important one nationally, and the apparent ineffectiveness of President Bush's first appointee as secretary of education produced a relatively early change at that position" (p. 272). *National Review* (1990) commented, "Education Secretary Lauro Cavazos, as usual, was about as actively involved as the carpet in Porter's office" (p. 15). The introductory comments to the October 1990 edition of *Education Digest* continued in a similar manner (Schroeder, 1990),

> But the closest [President Bush] really got to saying it with music was the well-orchestrated hype surrounding his work on national goals for education with the NGA. Last July, as if to prove the national goals of earlier in the year weren't part of 'Operation: Just Pause,' the Department of Education formally published those goals--in a little green pamphlet whose pointed austerity suggested the President might put his champagne goals on a beer budget" (p. 2).

Lewis, continued the lament in *Phi Delta Kappan* , "The nation's governors and the White House had problems this past summer in deciding how to move forward on the goals they first adopted in September [1989] a year ago" (1990c, p. 39). The following March she continued, "The national goals [are] languishing at the federal level in the President's already over-flowing domestic in-box..." (1991, p. 492). At least these observers believed that Bush had made little progress with education policy during the first part of his administration. In spite of such negative prognostications by the media, the national education goals endured.

Towards the end of this era, talk about another issue, national assessments, also emerged. As the goals began to develop, national assessments became a part of the thinking. The 1989 joint statement by the President and the NGA alluded to national assessments. "We must establish clear measures of performance and then issue annual report cards" (The White House, 1991, Appendix B, p. 6). The February 1990 joint statement noted, "National education goals will be meaningless unless progress toward meeting them is measured accurately and adequately, and reported to the American people" (The White House, 1991, Appendix A, pp. 8-9). A report in January 1991 from several presidential advisory groups supported the creation of national examinations (De Witt, 1991b). At about the same time President Bush stated that he wanted a mandatory national mathematics test for fourth graders by 1993 (De Witt, 1991a). Japanese and German successes were believed to show the way for the United States. Pipho expressed the sentiment at that time, "A national test is increasingly looking like a done deal" (1991). Lamar Alexander, shortly to become secretary of the Department of Education, favored national tests and school choice (De Witt, 1991c).

The *America 2000* Era: Alexander Comes to Office

The Department of Education became a major facilitating force when President Bush

appointed Alexander secretary. Alexander, the former Governor of Tennessee who signed the original *Time for Results* report, assumed the office of secretary on March 18, 1991 (De Witt, 1991c). Lewis (1991), in contrast to earlier comments, optimistically wrote, "Lamar Alexander is the first real education secretary. The national goals ... will provide a framework for the new secretary's efforts" (p. 492). Within one month of Alexander's arrival, the national goals had been formed into a legislative package including a strategy for achieving them. Titled *America 2000: An Education Strategy* (U.S. Department of Education, 1991), President Bush announced the plan on April 18, 1991. The *America 2000:* report included the President's address, the six goal statements, an explanation of the four-pronged strategy to accomplish the goals, the responsibilities of different parties, and details that further explained the goals and strategies to implement them. The four-part strategy to achieve the goals included: (1) creating better and more accountable schools, (2) creating a new generation of American schools for tomorrow's students, (3) transforming America into "a nation of students," and (4) making communities places where learning would happen (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

The announcement and the publicity generated by *American 2000* helped to expand the public's familiarity with the national education goals. Forums held across the country sampled public opinion about the national goals and how the NEGP should report its findings relative to the goals (National Education Goals Panel, 1991c; 1991d; 1991e; 1991f).

The six goals presented in the *America 2000* strategy served as the foundation for Bush's call for a revolution in education. This revolution was not to be driven by federal involvement – that was to be limited. Rather, it was anticipated that the nation's schools would voluntarily comply. Accountability described the intent of *America 2000.* This strategy included the development of "world class" standards and national assessments for students. Report cards based on state-level data for grades 4, 8, and 12 in five subject areas would be developed and compiled into an annual document to be released by the NEGP.

The *America 2000* legislative initiative resulted, almost immediately, in the congressional funding of a relatively small, but significant council to produce one report. In January 1992 the

National Council on Education Standards and Testing (NCEST), having broad bipartisan input from the public and industry, produced its pivotal report, *Raising Standards for American Education* (1992). The council advocated "high national education standards for all students and a voluntary, linked system of assessments (p. i)." The report continued, "in the absence of well-defined and demanding standards, education in the United States has gravitated toward *de facto* national minimum expectations, with curricula focusing on low-level reading and arithmetic skills and on small amounts of factual material in other content areas" (p. i).

The NCEST report along with the Department of Education's efforts focused attention on world class standards and the funding of many standards development projects. The lack of support for national assessments further encouraged the focus on standards as fundamental to accomplishing the national goals. The importance of developing world class standards was documented in the title of the 1993 NEGP summary guide, *Building the Best Education System: The Need for Nationwide Standards* (1993a). A pamphlet (U.S. Department of Education, 1992i) discussed world class standards and identified projects the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) had funded to develop national standards. A scant 18 months after President Bush had proposed the *America 2000* strategy, national standards had become the primary focus for education reform.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) unwittingly established a model for the development of standards when, independent of any funding, they developed standards for mathematics that were released in 1989 (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1989; Viadero, 1994). NCTM followed an extensive, participatory process incorporating representatives from both K-12 and higher education. These standards have been widely disseminated and have had a widespread impact both within and outside the mathematics arena.

The national standards development efforts funded by OERI included projects in science, history, civics, geography, English, fine and performing arts, physical education, and foreign language (O'Neil, 1993; U.S. Department of Education, 1992i). Some groups opted to develop national standards independently of federal support. The American Association for the

Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) had already published or were in the process of publishing documents. The National Council of Teachers of Social Studies (NCTSS) decided to independently develop integrated standards for the social studies that included civics, history, and geography.

Secretary of Education Alexander hired Diane Ravitch in 1991 to head OERI and act as lead for developing national standards and assessments. Ravitch (1993) acknowledged the radical nature of national education standards, "Five years before, even two years before, almost no one had spoken seriously about the possibility of national standards or a national testing system for individual students. Now both were prospects" (p. 770). She also noted the uncertainty about the role of the federal government in education reform. "At the outset it was not clear whether there was an appropriate federal role in setting standards or developing national examinations" (p. 768).

Ravitch's observations illustrate both the random nature of how the standards development projects began and the lack of direction the federal government provided in setting standards.

> As we were trying to figure out our strategy, a chance conversation in the summer of 1991 between Lamar Alexander and Frank Press of the National Academy of Sciences opened a new vista. They talked about how standards should be developed and who should do it. Shortly afterward, with the secretary's encouragement, the academy submitted a proposal to develop national standards in the sciences.... The science standards project defined the procedures and roles for subsequent efforts. The federal government would give funds to applicants who agreed to create a broad and inclusive process of arriving at consensus.... The project would agree to examine the standards used in other nations and in leading states. The standards produced by these projects would be voluntary, not mandatory. (p. 769)

While support for national education standards grew, similar support for national assessments in public education was absence. Ravitch noted that Congress had little receptivity to funding any type of testing projects either to develop internal activities or to support external groups. The resistance also came from the public's discontent with standardized, machine-scored, multiple choice tests (p. 771-772). Academics voiced concern with achievement tests and other types of high-stakes testing (Darling-Hammond, 1991; Harris & Longstreet, 1990; Madaus, 1991; Shepard, 1991). These concerns led Congress to refuse to fund any type of large-scale assessment projects. The Department of Education's only support for assessment was through funding of the

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Ravitch, 1993, p. 772). "Federally financed since the late 1960s, the NAEP is a survey of U.S. students' achievement in various subject areas" based on large national samples (Irwin, Stedman, & Riddle, 1991). During the early 1990s the NAEP responded to trends in testing and began to incorporate performance assessments in their tests. By 1992 little support existed for national assessments – standards alone had become the means to achieve the national education goals. The question, however, remained: How could standards have a substantial impact without associated assessments?

It is important to note that the *America 2000* legislation, in addition to calling for national assessments, included school choice and funding for "break-the-mold" schools in each congressional district. President Bush proposed a budget of $690 million for the legislation, but $535 million would have been allocated to the "break-the-mold" schools (Howe, 1991, p. 105-107; Peters, 1993, p. 273; U.S. Department of Education, 1991, p. 26-28). The New America Schools Development Corporation (NASDC), the private component of funding for break-the-mold schools, intended to obtain $250 million in private contributions, but only obtained $50 million (Bell, 1993, p. 594-595). NASDC eventually funded only 11 schools. Clinchy (1991) saw choice, achievement testing, and top-down implementation as the primary negatives of the proposed legislation. Congress evidently agreed. School choice and funding of break-the-mold schools, like national assessments, lacked the necessary support in Congress to ensure passage of *America 2000*, and the legislation was defeated.

In spite of this, the introduction of the proposed legislation and the simultaneous coordinated effort within the Department of Education had substantial impact. The department's commitment included supporting those parts of the *America 2000* strategy that were either relatively inexpensive or had been supported by limited congressional funding. Those parts encompassed promoting the goals nationally, supporting community efforts to meet the goals, and facilitating the development of national standards. The proliferation of documents published by the Department of Education during Alexander's tenure attests to the commitment of both the secretary and the department. Newsletters and programs supported voluntary community involvement (U.S.

Department of Education, 1992a; 1992b; 1992d; 1992g; 1992h). Numerous documents focused on the national education goals and efforts to implement them (U.S. Department of Education, 1992e; 1992f; 1992i). The department in conjunction with the NGA supported the NEGP and, consequently, annual reporting of progress towards achieving the goals continued uninterrupted. So the largely symbolic policy efforts to support the national education goals continued in much the same manner as they began. Alexander had succeeded in gaining broad national exposure and support for the national goals and standards.

The *Goals 2000* Era--Clinton Becomes President

The close of 1992 brought the election of our second "education" President, the former Governor of Arkansas. His resume showed a substantial history of educational involvement. Clinton had acted as vice-chairman of the NGA under Alexander when the NGA issued its 1986 report. Clinton continued his involvement with the NGA during the critical 1989-1990 time period when the goals were written. Richard Riley joined Clinton as secretary of education. Riley, the former governor of South Carolina, had been substantially involved with the NGA and the development of the national goals. We, thus, had a president and the second secretary of education with a substantial history with the national goals. Clinton (1992) set out his educational platform in the October 1992 issue of *Phi Delta Kappan*. The six national goals and world class standards formed the central components of his platform. Clinton complained that it took his predecessor over a year to introduce legislation after the goal statements had been crafted in 1990. During his first year in office Clinton lived up to his campaign promise to introduce legislation quickly. New legislation was introduced on April 21, 1993. Clinton said, "[This legislation] enshrines the national education goals that I deeply believe in" (Celis, 1993a; Pitsch, 1994f).

The name of the national goals initiative introduced by Clinton changed to *Goals 2000* and included the same six goals that originated in 1990. Key components of the legislation as introduced were essentially the same as those ultimately signed into law: (1) distributing funds to states in support of voluntary state standards-based reforms that had high expectations for all

students, (2) funding of the NEGP, (3) forming the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC) to certify voluntary national and state academic standards and state assessments, and (4) forming the National Skill Standards Board (NSSB) to develop voluntary skill standards for the non-college bound student (1994a; Chira, 1993; Pitsch, 1993; Pitsch, 1994b; Pitsch, 1994d). As noted previsously, *Goals 2000* included two new goals and became law when President Clinton signed it on March 31, 1994. The bipartisan support for the goals package and the Democratic-controlled Congress facilitated the successful journey of this legislation. The absence of controversial issues such as school choice also helped ensure passage. The end result of the *Goals 2000* legislation was the first federal education policy for all students--an education policy that would act as the focal point for all present and future federal legislation related to education.

The number of goals increased from six to eight. The two new goals address teacher education and parental participation.

- By the year 2000, the Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.
- By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

Two changes were made to existing goals. Added to the content areas in goal three were "foreign languages, civics and government, economics, [and] arts" plus the word "Nation's" was added. Added to goal six was "the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol". The two new goals were an attempt to provide official recognition of current practice in an attempt to professionalize teaching, to raise state standards for teacher education, and to ensure parental involvement in public schools.

Title III of the new legislation addressed the primary fiscal component of the legislation. The legislation allocated $400 million for fiscal year 1994 (1994a, Sec. 303). Each state qualified for a share of the allotment if in its application to the Department of Education it presented a state

improvement plan meeting the qualifications of section 306 of the Act. Section 306 required the state to develop a state-wide, broad-based outreach process to develop a plan based on state-wide content and performance standards and opportunity-to-learn standards. Hawaii and Michigan in July and August, 1994, respectively, became the first states to receive allotments (1994b; Pitsch, 1994c).

The *Act* emphasized the voluntary nature of the standards. States were free to develop their own standards, but NESIC, in accordance with provisions of the Act, would only certify state standards that met or exceeded national standards. No provision existed for states to receive their allotments without submission of a state improvement plan aligned with the national goals. Further support of the national goals and standards of evident in a requirement in the reauthorized *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) which required that states specify standards as a condition to receive Chapter 1 grants (Pitsch, 1994a; Pitsch, 1994e). Clinton signed the ESEA into law in October 1994. Through enactment of the ESEA, Congress created another substantial incentive for states to adopt "voluntary" standards.

Another important provision of the legislation included the legitimization of the NEGP and the provision for congressional funding of the panel. Since its inception in 1990 until passage of *Goals 2000* the NEGP was supported by the combined efforts of the administration and the NGA. The NEGP received some additional responsibilities as part of *Goals 2000* including review of all standards and assessments certified by NESIC. The legislation created a new entity, NESIC, which developed from a recommendation in the January 1992 NCEST report to create a National Education Standards and Assessments Council (NESAC) which would be responsible for certifying national standards and assessments to be used by states. The duties of NESIC (National Education Standards and Improvement Council) paralleled almost exactly the 1992 recommendations, but the word "assessment" was eliminated from its name. The change in name from NESAC to NESIC suggests the desire of the administration and Congress to keep national assessment issues in the background.

During 1993 and 1994 when the legislation was being debated in Congress, the vast

majority of professional literature supported implementation of national standards (1993; Alexander, 1993; Celis, 1993b; Costa, 1993; Gagnon, 1994; Mirel & Angus, 1994; O'Neil, 1993; O'Neil, 1994; Ravitch, 1993; Rhodes, 1994; Rose, 1994; Shanker, 1994; Sizer & Rogers, 1993; Spady, 1994; Stewart, 1994; The College Board, 1993; Viadero, 1994; Willis, 1994). This support was helpful in securing congressional approval of *Goals 2000*. O'Neil (1993) described the change that had occurred in just a few years, "Scenarios [regarding standards] that once seemed implausible have become almost commonplace" (p. 4). By 1993 the standards development activities associated with the national goals dwarfed all other activities that had been introduced with the goals. Public support for standards was exhibited in the 1994 annual *Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup* poll. Whereas in 1989 and 1991 approximately 70 percent of those polled favored national standards, in 1994 that support had risen to 83 percent (Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1994, p. 48). Policy makers, school boards, teachers, unions and the general public all demonstrated support for standards and the national education goals (American Association of School Administrators, 1991; Ducharme & Ducharme, 1994; Mirel & Angus, 1994; Shanker, 1994; U.S. Department of Education, 1992e).

Central to the role of standards was their predicted ability to act as a catalyst to systemic reform (Alexander, 1993). High standards developed by teachers through national standard setting processes would result in a determination of what children needed to know and learn. The standards would then enable teachers to focus on teaching instead of developing curriculum. Standards would also facilitate holding teachers accountable for students meeting the standards. *Goals 2000* with its requirement that states operationalize standards would encourage "voluntary" adoption of standards. A number of authors and NCEST posed another argument in favor of national standards. The felt that a *de facto* set of standards and a national curriculum had resulted from the use of standardized tests and textbooks produced by a limited number of publishers (Celis, 1993b; Lewis, 1993; Ravitch, 1993). Establishing national standards, in contrast, became an act of making a conscious choice about what American children should learn. Accomplished in a consensual manner, national standard setting projects would result in higher standards and

increased expectations. Textbook publishers would no longer be establishing standards or curricula; they would be required to develop their materials based on the existence of state and national standards.

National and state assessments were a less popular issue than national standards, but *Goals 2000* propelled assessment to greater prominence. The legislation did not mandate performance-based assessments, but each state is required to specify in its state improvement plan how assessments will be developed to align with standards specified in the plan. The assessments must include multiple measures of student performance and be consistent with national standards (1994a, Sec. 306(c)(1)(B)). These assessments may be submitted "voluntarily" to NESIC. In all likelihood, some states will find it prohibitive to develop their own assessments and will choose to use assessments developed nationally or by other states that have been approved by NESIC. This is likely to result in *de facto* national assessments, just as it did for standards.

The prospect of national and state assessments grew significantly with passage of *Goals 2000*. Unlike 1992, the larger education community did not react strongly to the new legislation which required state and national assessments. States were permitted to opt out of receiving funds under *Goals 2000* to avoid the legislative requirements. States choosing not to implement school improvement plans in accordance with the provisions of *Goals 2000* and ESEA were permitted to do so. But while adoption of the goals, standards, and assessments are "voluntary," there exists a significant financial penalty for states who opt for non-compliance.

Concerns about national and state standards and assessments are emerging. Viadero (1994) pointed out the difficulties of coordinating national activities with state efforts and the resulting confusion that could mitigate benefits. Kamii, Clark, and Dominick (1994) argued that the national goals and standards, based on tradition and the values and priorities of "elite" policy makers, could not meet the needs of the autonomous individual student in the public education system. Arons (1994) argued that a national curriculum would result from the imposition of national standards. Brandt (1994) discussed the problems outcome-based education programs have encountered with more fundamental religious groups and the problems of implementing

performance assessments. Goodman (1994) contended that "the standards movement promises the political power brokers that by controlling outcomes they can control schools while appearing to support local control" (p. 39). The June 1994 issue of *Educational Policy* discussed the related issues of standards and assessments (Martin-Kniep, Thornburg, & Cookson, 1994) and Celis encouraged readers to examine their assumptions about standards and assessments and offered a reminder that it is difficult to oppose the prospect of improved learning that standards are intended to produce.

> After all, who could argue against setting standards for students that specifically outline what they should know in each subject area at each grade level? And who could oppose exams that better measure student progress toward those standards--exams that abandon the old multiple-choice tests that research shows are biased against girls and minorities--and substitute new assessments that require students to do more writing and demonstrate an ability to think (1993b, p. 14)?

While many questions remain about the ability of the national goals and related standards to create the impetus for large-scale systemic change in education, few would question that national standards are extremely popular with policy makers and the public in general.

Conclusions and Interpretation

This paper has described a long and complex process. We must, however, guard against oversimplifying how federal policy develops. Clark and Astuto (1990) describe the environment and the cautions. "Federal policy changes are difficult to portray. On the one hand, specific policy actions or speeches create a sense of crisis that too much is happening too quickly. Conversely, general policy shifts move at such a glacial pace that the movement is barely noticeable" (p. 689). To present an overall view of what has occurred in the development of goals we must stand back to see and appreciate the broad picture of the glacial movement. Focusing on the minute details of the glacial advance or retreat may obscure the overall picture. This metaphor might also apply in examining the impact of the national education goals and standards on public education.

The discussion of the goals began in 1983 with a nation that had defined itself to be "at risk". In 1986 the NGA began to develop the state agenda for education. The governors and the "education" president joined together at the 1989 Charlottesville Summit with the six national goals

emerging over a four-month period. The goals languished until April 1991 when, shortly after Alexander's arrival, Bush presented *America 2000* to the public. The legislative initiative failed, but the strategy moved forward through a variety of political activities led by Alexander and the Department of Education. One important group, NCEST, received funding from Congress. NCEST produced their obscure, but pivotal report in January 1992. The Department of Education began funding national standards setting projects in a number of subject areas. The NCTM standards served as valuable model to various projects. The standards race had began. By October 1992 the Department of Education had funded six of the national standards development projects. The public elected another "education" president in November of 1992. Clinton then joined with Riley, his new secretary of education, to introduce legislation within four months of taking office. On March 31, 1994, Clinton signed the *Goals 2000* legislation and the national education goals with their associated standards and assessments became law.

From an idea in 1988 until 1994 the national goals survived the policy development process without being enacted in legislation. The goals, formed through a team of governors and the president, remained alive without congressional support. To what do we owe this remarkable feat? Certainly an element of luck exists--it was almost accidental. The bipartisan makeup of the original team, the fact that one of those team members became the next President, and the fact that two of the secretaries of education were former governors all contributed substantially. The failures of the eleven years of school reform since *A Nation at Risk* must also have been a contributing factor. Both the governors and the president needed (and continue to need) a national agenda for education. The national goals provided the focus – a focus on **all** children, not just the disadvantaged and disabled.

The addition of the word **all** to federal educational policy has and will continue to have an affect on education and the establishment of educational policy. Prior to 1994 the federal government primarily addressed policy issues regarding special populations. Exceptions were made during the Sputnik crisis, but for the most part the federal government limited its involvement. With enactment of *Goals 2000* the federal government would no longer limit that

involvement. The national goals and the "voluntary" standards and assessments tied to them address all students. In future the 1990s may be characterized as the decade when continuous federal involvement in education began. Local school boards and school districts will continue to play an important role, but their choices may be limited to how to implement goals as opposed to what goals to choose. Funding in support of *Goals 2000* could be reduced or the law could even be reversed, but a reduction in federal control seems unlikely. Declines in federal control rarely occur.

The opportunity to question federal control of education for all students – at least for the time being – expired when Clinton signed *Goals 2000*. We, as educators, must now politic in Washington not just on issues of disadvantaged and disabled students, but on all educational issue. The national goals and related standards and assessments impact education now. One can not help but wonder if national curriculum might result in an unforeseen manner as the goals did. The unpredictable became the norm for the evolution of the national goals. The $400 million authorized by the act in 1994, with its requirement for development of state level standards and assessments, will certainly encourage curriculum conformity at least within states. When considering the *de facto* curriculum that results from the homogeneity created by text book manufacturers the possibility of national curriculum and assessments grows. Regardless of the issue, as educators we must now lobby for those policies that best support children at the federal level as well. One could argue that the option to exclude ourselves, as educators, from national educational politics expired in 1989 when the president and the governors operationalized the concept of national goals. But who would have known at the time?

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Appendix A

Time-line of Eras, Key Players and Key Events

	Year											
	1983	**1984**	**1985**	**1986**	**1987**	**1988**	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**
Era	**Origins**								***America 2000***		***Goals 2000***	
President	Reagan						Bush				Clinton (1)	
Education Secretary	Bell		Bennett				Cavazos		Alexander (2)		Riley (3)	
Key Event	*Nation at Risk*			*Time for Results*			Charlott-esville Summit	*National Goals* released	*America 2000* introduced		*Goals 2000* introduced	*Goals 2000* legislated
Responsible for Key Event	Bell			National Governors Association (NGA)			NGA & Bush	NGA & Bush	Bush & Alexander		Clinton & Riley	Congress

Key:
(1) former governor of Arkansas
(2) former governor of Tennessee
(3) former governor of South Carolina

Appendix B

Chronological List of Events

Date	Event
April 1983	*A Nation at Risk* released by the National Commission on Excellence in Education that was organized by Terrel Bell, then secretary of education, in 1981.
August 1986	*Time for Results* released by NGA. Lamar Alexander, who would become Bush's second secretary of education, served as chairman of the initiative and Bill Clinton was co-chair. Richard Riley who would become Clinton's secretary of education signed this report as well.
Summer 1988	National goals recommended for education policy agenda (Marchese, 1988).
November 1989	Bush elected President.
Summer 1989	*Results in Education: 1989* published. Report recommends national goals (National Governors' Association, 1989).
September 1989	Charlottesville Education Summit jointly held by Bush and the NGA, they agree to produce national goals.
February 1990	Six national education goals made public jointly by Bush and the NGA.
July 1990	White House reports to the NGA (The White House, 1990).
July 1990	National goals published in 16 page pamphlet by U.S. Department of Education (U.S. Department of Education, 1990).
July 1990	Bush and NGA agree to form the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP).
December 1990	*Results in Education: 1990* published (National Governors' Association, 1990).
February 1991	White House completes second report to the NGA (The White House, 1991).
March 1991	Alexander becomes secretary of education.
April 1991	*America 2000* strategy including the six national goals released (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).
Summer 1991	First national standards setting project conceived as discussed by Ravitch (1993).
September 1991	First National Education Goals report (National Education Goals Panel, 1991).
January 1992	*Raising Standards for American Education* released. Voluntary national standards and assessments recommended (National Council on Education Standards and Testing, 1992).
September 1992	Second National Education Goals report (National Education Goals Panel, 1992).

Date	Event
October 1992	Pamphlet titled *World Class Standards for American Education* released listing national standards setting projects (U.S. Department of Education, 1992).
November 1992	Clinton elected President.
April 1993	*Goals 2000* legislation including six national goals introduced.
September 1993	Third National Education Goals report (National Education Goals Panel, 1993).
March 1994	*Goals 2000* legislation including eight goals (original six with slight modification plus two new goals regarding teacher education and parental involvement) signed by Clinton (1994).
June 1994	Pamphlet titled *High Standards for All Students* released listing current national standards setting projects (U.S. Department of Education, 1994).
September 1994	Fourth National Education Goals report.

Appendix C

Glossary of Names, Reports, and Terms

Alexander, Lamar	Secretary of education second half of Bush administration, governor of Tennessee, 1979-1987.
America 2000	Strategy for meeting the national goals introduced by Bush in April 1991, legislation associated with strategy not passed by congress (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).
A Nation at Risk	Report published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in April 1983. Bell setup Commission (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).
Bell, Terrel	Secretary of education 1981-1985 under President Reagan.
Bennett, William	Secretary of education 1985-1988 under President Reagan.
Cavazos, Lauro	Secretary of education first half of Bush administration.
Goals 2000	Strategy for meeting the national goals introduced by Clinton in March 1993. Associated legislation enacted into law March 31, 1994, codifying the National Education Goals (1994).
National Education Goals	Six goals announced jointly by Bush and the NGA February 25, 1990. The original six goals plus two new goals codified in *Goals 2000* (National Governors' Association, 1990; The White House, 1990,1994).
NCEST	National Council on Education Standards and Testing funded by congress in 1991 to publish *Raising Standards for American Education* (1992).
NEGP	National Education Goals Panel formed by Bush and the governors to account for progress towards the national goals. Funded and given legal status as part of *Goals 2000*.
NESIC	National Education Standards and Improvement Council established by *Goals 2000* will certify national and state standards, and state assessments.
NGA	National Governors' Association.
NSSB	National Skill Standards Board established by *Goals 2000*, will serve as a catalyst for developing national standards and assessments regarding workforce skills.
Ravitch, Diane	Assistant secretary for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) under Alexander.
Results in Education	Annual reports established by NGA to report results towards recommendations made in *Time for Results*. Four annual reports dated 1987 - 1990 were published. Annual reporting discontinued when NEGP established (National Governors' Association, 1989, 1990).

Riley, Richard	Secretary of education for President Clinton; former governor of South Carolina.
Time for Results	Report published by the NGA in August 1986 which recommended actions for the states and setup annual reporting on progress for five years through 1991. Four reports titled *Results in Education* published through 1990. Annual reporting discontinued when NEGP established.

Appendix D

National Educational Goals Legislated by *Goals 2000*

1. By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

2. By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

3. By the year 2000, American students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, , economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy.

4. By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.

5. By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

6. By the year 2000, every school in American will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

7. By the year 2000, the Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.

8. By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

Note: The goals have been numbered here as they were in the original goals. The legislation inserted the goal on teacher education between goals 3 and 4. Here it shows as goal 7. The only goals changed were numbers 3 and 6. Added to the content areas in goal 3 were "foreign languages, civics and government, economics, (and) arts" plus the word "Nation's" was added. Added to goal 6 was "the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol."